

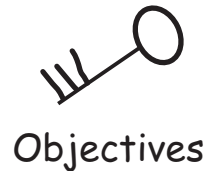
TEAM ROLES

There can be many different reasons for working with other people. You might get together with one other person or a group of friends, or you may be part of a more formal group or team. Some of these working arrangements work better than others. What makes the difference?

In this section you can think about:

- the different jobs involved when working in groups
- why some groups seem to work better than others
- the different roles people play in teams or groups
- what makes a successful work team
- how you can play a more effective role in your working relationships

If you can, discuss the activities in this section with some work mates, or a group of fellow students, so that you can share ideas and experiences and learn from each other.





Groups and Teams

Activity 1

What is a group? Can you think of an example of a group of people who do things together?

What is a team? Can you think of any teams that work together?

Activity 2

In the table below, list as many examples of groups and teams as you can. Start your list on your own, then discuss ideas with others you are working with.

Groups	Teams



Activity



Discussion

Jobs in a Group



Activity 3

This is an *Activity* that you can try with a group. If you have recently formed a group with a particular aim, e.g. to raise funds for a children's hospice, or a job club at the employment office, then it would be useful to discover all the different roles needed for you to work well together and to be successful. Even if you are working quite informally with a few friends, e.g. campaigning for improved playgrounds in your area, it would still be useful to recognise the different roles required.

- Give everyone 5 small pieces of paper and ask them to write down jobs and roles they think are necessary when working with others
- In the middle of a large sheet of paper write **"A WORKING GROUP"**
- Everyone then fixes their pieces of paper with jobs around the middle circle
- Join up any similar suggestions
- Discuss the results of your search and decide if there are any gaps

In the *Appendix* you will find a list of jobs that you can compare with the results of your group activity. Did you think of jobs that are not on the list? Are there suggestions on the list that you would like to add to your one?

Activity 4

What talents and skills do the different roles call for?

Think of the different characteristics each role in the team might need. Complete the table below, adding other roles that you think are important and the characteristics that suit them. In **ARKS Keys to Learning**, the section *Happy Shower* includes a list of adjectives that you can refer to in order to help you describe different characteristics.



group leader	a good listener, democratic,...
secretary	punctual, a good organiser
critic	unbiased, realistic,...



Activity 5

What roles and jobs would you choose to take on, or which ones have you had experience in?

Which jobs do you enjoy most?

Which jobs do you find challenging?

Activity 5 continued

Have you ever been a member of a really successful group or team? What do you think made it successful?

Have you ever been a member of a group or team that didn't work well together? What do you think happened in this group to prevent it working well?

Can you name any work teams where it is important for the people involved to co-operate with each other?

fire fighters, medical teams



Activity
continued



Activity
continued

Activity 5 continued

What do you think makes these particular teams or groups successful?

Studies have shown that the brightest or most creative people do not necessarily make the best team workers. It would appear that a mix of personal characteristics makes a better team or group. Some analysts of group behaviour have identified a range of personal characteristics as key roles in a group.

See the *Appendix* for a list of key roles.

Here are some characteristics of a successful group:

- is clear about what it wants to do
- shares common objectives
- respects each member's different views
- values everyone's contribution
- gets jobs done efficiently, doesn't waste time and energy
- has everything it needs to achieve its objectives

Activity 6

The News Team

For this *Activity* someone in the group will have to take the role of group leader.

You will need:

- a tape recorder
- a selection of stories/interviews from recent newspapers

Group task

to write and present 'The News at Six' for radio

Preparation time

1 hour

Team roles

newsreaders

editor

journalists

sound technician





Activity continued

Activity 6 continued

- Your group leader can provide you with a selection of press cuttings to use as news items in your programme, or you can agree to all bring some along to the group.
- Start by allocating roles within the group. How do you decide who does what? Is everyone clear about their role?
- Decide how you are going to use your time, i.e. reading and selecting items for the programme, script writing, rehearsals, final broadcast
- During the preparation time and up until the broadcast, other news can filter into the 'newsroom' as it becomes available. (Group leader can deliver these at intervals). How do you decide if they should be included in the bulletin?
- Prepare the headlines and the news broadcast to last for five minutes.
- Record the broadcast

Discussion

When you have completed your news recording and listened to it, spend some time discussing the *Activity* by answering these questions:

- Did people feel suited to their role?
- Would it be possible for someone to play more than one role?
- What were the key roles in your news team?
- How easy was it to agree on who took on each role?
- Which are the most essential roles if teams are to work well together?

Look what happens if you combine three key roles in a team:

- the group leader
- the ideas person
- the practical organiser

Activity 6 continued

The result is a combination of bright ideas, practicality and direction – the backbone for a good group or team. The size of the group is not important. Small groups can have energy and commitment, while large groups might have a greater breadth of knowledge.



**Activity
continued**



What have you learned?

Evaluation Questions

Did you get the opportunity to try new roles in these *Activities*?

Could these *Activities* help your present group to think about how to allocate the different roles in order to be successful?

Appendix

Key roles in a group

The group leader	Mature, balanced, focused and confident. <i>Able to draw people out; a good listener and a good judge. Ensures that everyone is included.</i>
The ideas person	Creative, imaginative, innovative and unorthodox <i>Able to think laterally and produce ideas for the group</i>
The practical organiser	Practical, reliable, efficient and good at planning <i>Able to implement plans and make things work. Can turn ideas into tasks, plans and schedules.</i>
The group shaper	Outgoing, full of drive, achievement and passion <i>Able to pull people along and get things done.</i>
The critic	Serious and analytical <i>Able to look at all the angles and spots problems. Is the evaluator for the group.</i>
The information gatherer	Bright, enthusiastic and interesting, good at networking <i>Able to glean ideas and find new contacts and sources of support for the group.</i>

The team worker

Friendly, committed, perceptive and a good listener

Able to work in any group; sensitive to atmosphere and good at building bridges between people.

The finisher

Careful, conscientious, a perfectionist who worries about standards

Able to keep to schedules and deadlines and ensure that agreements are observed and that tasks are completed.

The joker

Playful, has a strong sense of humour and is entertaining

The comedian. Able to tease, poke fun and act the clown. "Stirs thing up", can keep things light hearted and lift the morale of the group.